# Agamemnon

Even though *Agamemnon*'s story seems as if it includes only successive vengeance within a family, it is far from being a story without a deeper background. *Agamemnon* is a story that begins after the fall of Troy, where his brother's wife, Helen, stays. Throughout the story, there are many symbols that refer both to myth and to how the gods have a hand in humanity by treating people as puppets for their own amusement. I would like to convey the themes and symbols that I have identified in the story. To begin with, in my point of view, the main themes are justice and religious domination over people, whereas the symbols include womanly attitude as a serpent in myth, the red carpet, and finally the sword and dagger represented through killing. What I have mentioned above will be the highlights of the story that I connected to myth.

The first main theme is justice, which dominates the entire story. Justice is represented from two points of view: one according to the gods' image and the other according to human perception. To begin with the gods' image, justice is something the gods impose by assigning fate to humanity according to their own rules. I believe that justice should be divided into two perspectives, as it carries different meanings for different beings. For instance, in the story, Agamemnon's killing of his own daughter is considered justice in terms of sacrificing her to the gods in order to gain victory, whereas Clytemnestra's killing of her husband is the reason she considers her own actions as justice. That is why the chain of murders—his daughter, Agamemnon, Clytemnestra, and Orestes—occurs, as each character acts according to the justice they believe in. Besides human justice, the gods also claim authority over justice. For example, Apollo makes Orestes kill his mother, who murdered Apollo's beloved Cassandra, by believing

that revenge itself is justice. Thus, Apollo's perspective on justice is shown as different from that of other gods, just as humans differ in their understanding of justice.

Another important theme is the religious aspect of the story. The background of the time reflects an era in which people were slaves to the gods, who played with their fate. Therefore, people felt obliged to imitate the gods' deeds in order to achieve what they desired. For instance, Agamemnon sacrifices his daughter because of his religious belief that this act is necessary to win the Trojan War. I believe he imitates the god Prometheus, who sacrificed an animal to Zeus in order to avoid punishment and return to humanity unpunished. The reason for this comparison is that Agamemnon is unwilling to return without winning the war and bringing Helen back to his brother, as such a failure would not suit a king's status. As a result, he abandons his role as a father by sacrificing his daughter to win the war and secure his reputation as a powerful king. Since this myth aligns with Agamemnon's actions, I would argue that his murder by his wife serves as punishment for representing himself as a godlike figure, which contradicts the religious order.

Another symbol, the serpent, is represented through background stories and inferences that I have drawn. The serpent symbolizes temptation in biblical understanding. For instance, Clytemnestra, whom I view as a serpent, exiles Orestes to a place where he is unaware of vengeance. Orestes represents both Adam and Eve when he recalls the happiest days with his father, who represents the Lord in Eden. As background for this inference, the serpent seduces Eve into eating the forbidden apple, and Adam, tempted by Eve, follows her, causing both to be exiled from heaven, where they once lived happily with the Lord. Considering this story, I suggest that Orestes represents Adam, while Clytemnestra represents the serpent who causes Adam/Orestes to be exiled.

Other symbols include the red carpet, the sword, and the dagger, all of which carry significant meaning in the play. Firstly, the red carpet on which Agamemnon walks proudly after winning the war represents the path of the gods, who alone are permitted to walk upon it. By walking on the carpet, Agamemnon feels himself to be godlike, and this hubris ultimately leads him to doom, as rivaling the gods results in punishment. Secondly, the sword, used by Orestes to kill Clytemnestra, symbolizes power and courage, as it involves facing the enemy directly. In contrast, the dagger represents insidiousness, as it signifies killing someone from behind rather than confronting them. For instance, Clytemnestra uses a dagger hidden from sight to kill her husband without his awareness, showing her lack of courage to face him directly. On the other hand, Orestes' use of a sword symbolizes dignity and strength, even when he kills his own mother face to face.

In conclusion, these symbols may be considered controversial or open to different interpretations; however, my perspective is based on mythological backgrounds, such as the stories of Prometheus and Adam and Eve. To sum up, I believe that both gods and humans possess different understandings of justice. Moreover, the religious aspect reflects how people are bound to obey the gods without challenging them. Finally, I believe that *Agamemnon* represents how the gods wield humanity and alter human decisions according to their own will.